

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION OAKLAND CALIFORNIA

High School Libraries



OF OAKLAND

BOARD OF EDUCATION BULLETIN

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Statistics

Average daily attendance in the Oakland High schools.....	3,089
Number of High School teachers in the Oakland schools.....	160
Number of books in the High School libraries collectively....	18,376
Daily average circulation of books in all the H. S. libraries....	1,620
Estimated daily reference work in all the H. S. libraries.....	1,109
Estimated daily book use in all the H. S. libraries.....	2,729



On High School Libraries

JOHNSTON, CHARLES T.—In *The Modern High School*.

JOHNSTON, CHARLES HUGHES—In *High School Education*.

FAGG, E. H.—*High School Libraries*, in *N. E. A. Proceedings*, 1911.

KEYES, R. K.—*How We Use Our High School Library*, in *English Journal*, February, 1914.

WARD, GILBERT O.—*The High School Library*, A. L. A. preprint from *Manual of Library Economy*, chapter seven.

Wilson Bulletin for November, 1914, and for March, 1915.

High School Libraries in Oakland, Calif.

Purposes

Libraries have grown into the High School system of Oakland in answer to a persistent demand. They were established first by the English and History departments, but have extended their service to all departments, and are now looked upon as indispensable parts of school equipment. Their aim is to supply the rapid, highly specialized book service necessary in schools, while preserving the thoroughness of the best public library methods. They secure efficient library aid for the faculties and provide special library instruction for the pupils, besides filling the immediate daily book demands of our High School-going public of some four thousand boys and girls.

Organization

Each of the city's High Schools—Oakland, Fremont, Technical, University and Vocational—has a library in its own building. The first three have trained librarians in charge. The libraries are supported from the school fund, and the librarians are elected by the Board of Education, each librarian becoming a member of the faculty of the school to which appointment has been made, with a salary standard of an instructor of three years' experience. Only trained and experienced librarians are employed who hold a college certificate in addition to their library credentials.

Methods of Administration

Methods of administration, including terms and manner of loans, are decided upon by the librarian of each school according to the size of the library, the necessity for the repeated use of certain books, and the average time required by pupils of that school for accomplishing their outside reading. In one school the term of a loan may be for one week or for two weeks, while in another school most of the books may circulate as period or over-night loans. In schools where books circulate on period loans, the same book may be borrowed and returned seven to nine times in the day. This, of course, requires special loaning arrangements that are almost impossible under public library methods. The greatest freedom is given the librarian in adapting the work to local conditions. One of the schools has a book collection of eight thousand volumes, another has five thousand, while others have smaller numbers. It is the plan to increase the collection in each school until it shall reach the ten thousand mark and then to make only such purchases as shall keep the libraries replenished and modern. All book buying is done after consultation between heads of departments and the librarian, and regular library prices are obtained on purchases. Reading lists, again, are made out through the united work of teachers and librarians.



WRITING DESKS—FREMONT HIGH SCHOOL LIBRARY

Fields of Work

The circulation of books from the school libraries is large. In a school of a thousand pupils it is not unusual to circulate five hundred books a day. Besides this circulation the same school will handle three hundred and fifty reference workers, bringing the total of actual book users in the day up to eight or sometimes nine hundred. In schools of larger attendance or where the nine-period system is in operation, the circulation rises accordingly.

This book delivery, however, is only a part of the work done. Special reference material is collected for students from all departments, who bring to the library the endless questions arising in the preparation of work for the classroom. When fifty boys and girls are in the library during a study period, their questions will dive, seemingly, into all things knowable, from the Greek drama to the habits of hummingbirds, and from the principles of the spectrum to the characteristics of furniture in the reign of Queen Anne.

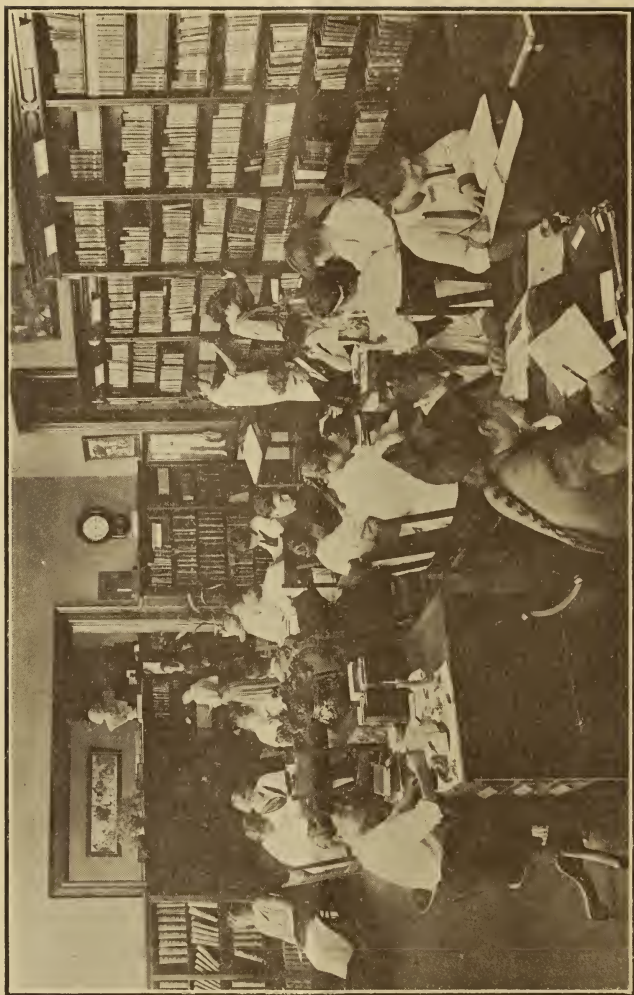
Back magazines are preserved, and, with the help of Readers' Guide, which is an index to all magazine literature, much valuable reference material is daily supplied from this source.

Bibliographies are made out for the use of both teachers and students. It is a great saving of time to the teacher to have reliable lists of all sources of library material upon a given subject. If the teacher wants quickly an outline of the places where the best information can be found upon chivalry, let us say, or forestry, or Roman costume, or Gothic architecture, or the construction of the cotton gin, the library will supply the required lists. Teachers who have been accustomed to spend several hours on the "hunting up" work on a given subject in a High School without a library service find that they can prepare the same work in a few minutes in an organized school library.

Exhibitions of pictures and other material are assembled from time to time and displayed in the library as the classroom work brings this or that subject to the fore in the term's course of study. Stereopticons and lantern slides are filed and assembled in the same way for special talks to classes in history, science or English. *Benjamin*

✓ Some of the libraries are making beginnings towards appropriate museum collections. Rare newspapers of historical interest, manuscript letters relating to adventures in early days in California, specimens of old currency and such other material of curious value are frequently contributed by students whose interest in such relics has been stimulated by seeing exhibits in the library and who are glad to give such things from their family collections when they know that they will be properly cared for in the permanent collections of their school.

In one of the schools the librarian does several hours of story-telling each week. In other schools lectures are given by the librarian on the selection of an individual library, how to buy, how books are made, how to judge of the value of certain classes of books, and on the history of bookmaking in relation to the history of civilization. Another librarian lectures on magazine literature of the day and on current poetry.



OAKLAND HIGH SCHOOL LIBRARY

Newspapers are handled in some of the schools in the usual library way, while in other schools they are introduced through clippings which are posted daily covering the great world events, and representing also the legislative work in federal and state matters and important local affairs as these topics are brought out in the classes in current history.

Handsomely bound and illustrated editions of the classics are purchased occasionally and kept in the libraries for reference only. Every day some of the young people ask to examine one or more of these volumes, for they delight to see the characters whom they have studied in the ordinary text book spring into vivid life and color from the page illustrated by some master artist. It is hard to overestimate the cultural value of a few finely published books.

Instruction in the use of libraries and in the "short cuts" known to the trained reference worker are taught in all the High Schools. Catalogues of the best professional standard are made or are being made for all the school libraries, so that all familiarity gained with these book aids in the High School may be applicable in University or City libraries. The Universities say that the High School pupil trained in library methods when he enters the University can save three months of his college time over his less prepared competitors. This work is usually required as a part of the English course, about three lectures a term being obligatory as well as three written papers on the subject of library use.

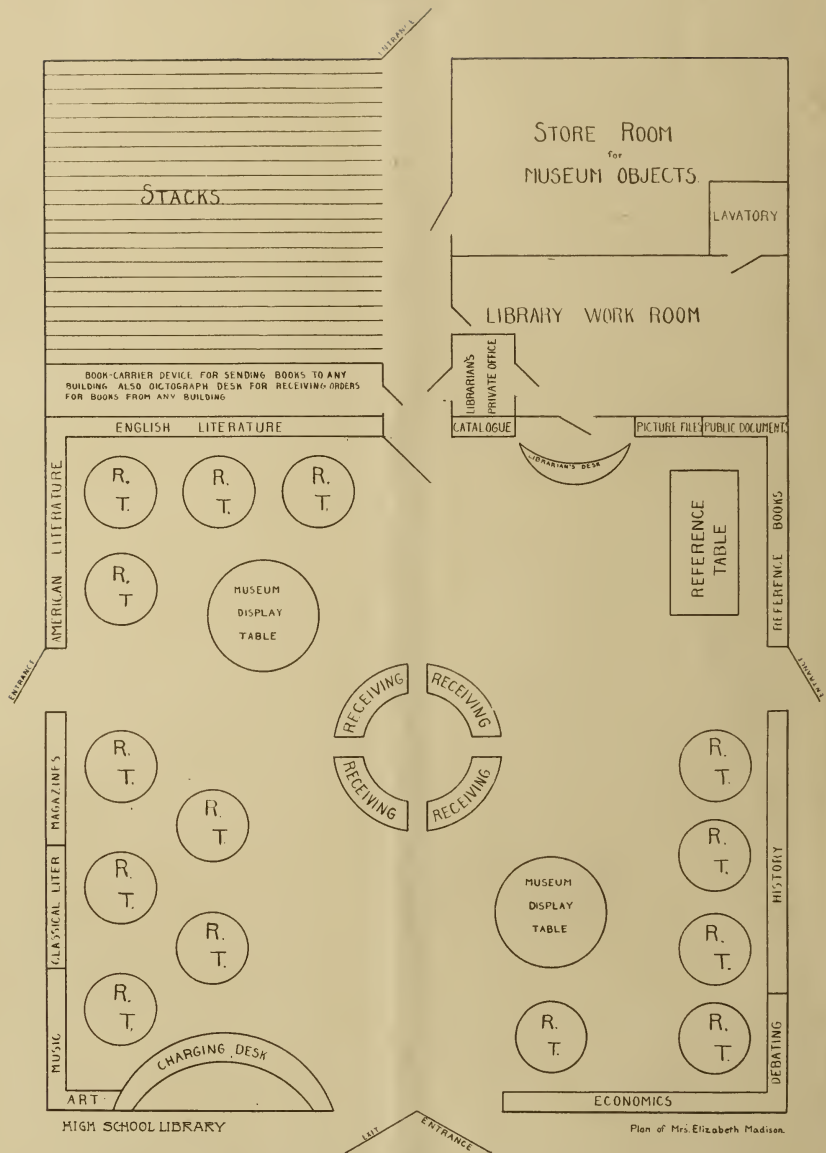
Technical library training for those who wish to enter the work as a profession is taught to certain selected students. Several of those who have taken these courses have made a professional beginning already, although these courses have been established only about a year and a half.

Equipment

In none of our high schools is the library used as an assembly or a study hall. It is always reserved entirely for borrowers or reference workers. The best equipment is necessary in a school library, and the safest policy has been found to be "build slowly and build well." Special effort is made to render the library attractive by the selection of good pictures, appropriate furniture and simple decorations. In some of the schools the student body has been so interested in the library that it has provided extra adornments in the way of flowers, potted plants, window curtains and occasional small pieces of statuary or exceptionally good prints for the walls.

A Student Activity

In cases where a Students' Activity Credit is recognized, it has been found practicable to allow a quarter of a credit a term for one period of work done in the library as student assistant. The pupils take pride in seeing members of the student body in these positions, and seem to feel more surely than ever that the High School library is "our very own library."



BOOK-CASES, FIVE AND A HALF FEET, WINDOWS ABOVE